US Army Corps of Engineers

DCAF Bulletin

Design Construction Analysis Feedback

No. 96-04 Issuing Office: CEMP-CE Issue Date: 26 MAR 96 Exp. Date: 30 DEC 98

CEMP-C

Subject: TEN MOST COMMON SAFETY DEFICIENCIES

Applicability: Information

While we often celebrate the effectiveness of Corps and Contractor safety programs, the success of same requires constant vigilance and a pro-active approach to maintaining a safe work place and safe work habits for Corps and contractor employees alike. Safety at the construction site is everyone's responsibility and a contract requirement, just like concrete strength. In spite of our successful past, we have still experienced a disturbing number of fatalities and traumatic injuries in the past year. We are therefore challenged to review our commitment to safety and to audit our management practices to assure full compliance with applicable regulations, guidance and best industry practice. The following list of safety violations was presented at the biennial Safety and Occupational Health Conference held in Washington, D.C., 18-22 March 1996. These violations were noted during our design construction evaluations and are presented in order of frequency of observation. You should use these observations as a starting place to facilitate your self evaluation. The references in parenthesis are the applicable paragraphs in EM 385-1-1, Safety and Health Requirements Manual.

1. Scaffold's not constructed properly. They lack an access ladder (22.B.08), they have no toe boards (21.B.04), planks not secured to prevent movement (22.B.06.a), they have no intermediate rails or no side rails at all (21.B.08).

2. Temporary power cords laying in traffic areas subject to damage in violation of EM 385-1-1, paragraph 11.A.03.b which states "Where subject to damage due to traffic temporary power cords shall be suspended overhead or buried underground to protect them from damage". Temporary power cords that are frayed or patched (11.A.03.d) or the wrong type of cord are being used, i.e., not rated for hard or extra hard usage (11.A.03.a).

3. Inadequate protection of excavations from accidental falls, i.e., no protective fences or barricades (25.B.01.a).

4. No GFCI on temporary power (11.C.05).

5. Job site ladders are not constructed properly, are too short, are not properly tied off, etc. (21.D.01 thru 21.D.11).

6. No fire extinguishers where required on equipment (16.A.26), at fueling points (09.B.03), where welding, (10.C.01).

7. Contractor safety plans not approved or approved when they are not complete (01.A.07) or accident hazard analysis are not provided or they do not address all hazards associated with the item of work (01.A.09).

8. No reverse flow check valves installed between the torch and the regulator on oxyacetylene torches (10.D.08).

9. No back-up alarms on construction equipment (16.B.01).

10. Gas cylinders are not properly stored (20.D.08 and 20.D.10).

The existence of these and other safety hazards is indicative of poor management by the contractor of his/her accident prevention program. The focus of our actions should be on the improvement of the contractor's safety management efforts as opposed to Corps assumption of an inspection and enforcement role.

CHARLES R. SCHROER
Chief, Construction Division
Directorate of Military Programs